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## South Bend

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ANTHONY ROBINSON

## *South Bend*

First there were things & then  
there were other things—it was a time

of great specificity

(& floating)

\*

you, my love, my jugular vein, were the rebel  
were the Other Thing.

\*

Never mind tornadoes, helicopters, & tomato paste.

Never mind that in the Army “Warrant Officer” means  
you drive a helicopter.

In the Navy it means something  
completely different.  
(You wouldn’t know this. You shouldn’t.)

\*

To yoke, incongruously, desperate things together  
has a long & varied, storied, buried history.

It has, my little monkey, a pedigree.

A symphony of men, turkey leg bits clinging to crispy beards,  
adorned in lace & fringed (& cringed) brocade, penning

verses to be understood. They say. & curtsy.

\*

& the ugliness of the ampersand implies an ugliness  
in the user: of this I am guilty.

I also plead no contest to finding you more indispensable than the  
serial comma.

\*

Here, one point seven thousand miles away, it can be said.  
(And the passive construction frees me from agency.)

Here, 1700 leagues from The Zoo. Here, 1700 times point six two  
kilometers  
away from the lake, the effect of which makes snowmen quiver,

Here lies your daddy: once- (& twice- & thrice-) besotted, poorly read  
or misread,

\*

occupying nothing.      [silence      calm breath]

\*

You occupy with curls, with black eyes, with  
Spanish, with your newfound skill of spelling

(O! and strike some o' that up there, yes? Is *trita et obvia*, no?)

\*

The day you came to town was perilous & I was gaunt.

The woman you call "mommy" was a dusky traffic flare.

I. Well, I slept after. I slept, waited for you to become.

\*

*2000 miles is very far through the snow.*

//

## *Report*

A rifle going off to somewhere distant, matrixed to the sea, to vanishing point.

\*

To pretty soon now be bitter is a pre-existing condition, occasioned by temporal fugue, by overactive bladder, by a deep sense of

[ ]

A traveler walks through our newspapers, which are dying in the fields as she brushes each stem or leaf & wonders what they were before a single drop of water could transform a smartphone camera into a magnifying glass.

\*

Pundits blog about the short form, about economies of scale. Daylight no longer appeals.

& my friend said to me, he sd, “I’m worried about the 55,000 *hausfraus* who will get this in their in-box tomorrow & will they hate me”

which like all good stories trails off & resists the urge to cross-reference & resists the temptation to boil it all down to a syrup of weather reports or catty retorts

for every woman who has wronged you.

It's always about you. Web cam flickers. Room dims.

\*

Pipers traverse the sand dunes above a lake; buggies roam.

Watch out, traveler.

//